

R/C flyers fill Holloman skies

by Airman 1st Class Stephen Collier
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bilities. Sergeant Entinger said just about every R/C flyer's ultimate goal is transition into the jet age.

On a desolate stretch of pavement in the north area of the base, a place someone wouldn't give much thought to during the week, exists a unique location that is invaded by radio-controlled airplanes on the weekend.

It's model building at its finest and for radio-controlled aircraft operator Staff Sgt. Robert Entinger, 49th Maintenance Operations Squadron, the hobby that started out as an interest grew into an almost obsession.

"The club members love to put their modeling skills to the test," Stealth City Flyers President Sergeant Entinger said. "By designing, building and flying gas and electric-powered aircraft, we get a thrill out of creating something from scratch."

The club uses the Holloman Balloon Operations Center's pad which has launched balloons for testing since 1947.

The Flyers are made up of 13 members, all of which have membership with the Academy of Model Aeronautics, the world's largest sport aviation organization, representing a membership of more than 170,000 from every walk of life, income level and age group, according to the AMA Web site.

Members make use of prop-driven aircraft and helicopters that differ between their land and water-based capa-

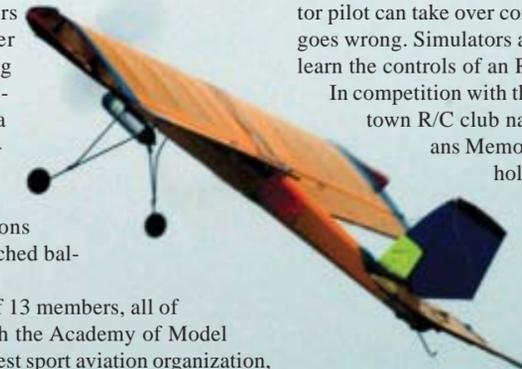
"Some of the technological advances in R/C flyers are just phenomenal," Sergeant Entinger said. "Little, jet turbine engines, the size of a soda can, can power models up to 300 mph. Many of the plane designs replicate our Air Force bombers from the 1960s and 1970s. It's really cool to see one fly by you 50 feet off the ground."

Getting involved in flying the light-weight aircraft is easy, according to Sergeant Entinger. The sport makes use of a Buddy Box system similar to an instructor and student pilot. With two radios connected to each other, an instructor pilot can take over controls for the student if something goes wrong. Simulators are also available for computers to learn the controls of an R/C aircraft at home.

In competition with the Stealth City Flyers is the downtown R/C club named after the Alamogordo Veterans Memorial Park. A group of 80 members, hold five events a year and make use of a new facility downtown that gives flyers two-400 foot long runways for its members.

Sergeant Entinger said his club members were dedicated to the hobby and to the saying, "fix it, build it, and fix it again."

"Our main goal is to attract as many members to the club as possible," Sergeant Entinger said. "The sport only gets to be more fun with more members. We just want to offer Holloman something unique they haven't seen before."



Mr. Mark Franzak flies his helicopter to do aerobatics during the Stealth Flyers Club gathering Saturday.

Right: David Wheeler Sr. flies his plan using a remote controller that transmits a quarter of a mile.



Below: Mr. Clarence Seagrave checks over his engine before doing vertical aeronautic tricks.



Mr. Randy Highland adds beans to a airplane before its turn at the bean competition. The competition requires flyers to maneuver planes without spilling the beans.



Photos by Airman 1st Class Stephen Collier

Mr. Chris Pierce (left) prepares his aircraft for flight during the bean competition as Staff Sgt. Robert Entinger helps.



Left: Mr. Chris Pierce performs maneuvers after taking off from Holloman Balloon Operations Center's pad. The pad has been used for operations since 1947.



Right: Mr. Clarence Seagrave inspects his aircraft's structural integrity before flying. The Alamogordo Stealth City Flyers club gathered at Holloman to fly radio-controlled planes Saturday. Mr. Seagrave is one of 13 members who gathers on weekends to fly R/C aircraft.